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KYRGYZSTAN

SUCCESS STORY

Getting back valuable land

Tashbulak Aiyl Okmotu gets back 812 hectares of land for its residents



Photo credit: D-Media

A surveyor is recording measurements of land plots as part of the process of inventorying LRF land in Tashbulak.

USAID's Land Reform and Market Development Project is assisting 120 aiyl okmotus throughout Kyrgyzstan to inventory the state-owned land they administer. The project surveys the land, clarifies borders, and develops a five-year strategic plan with the AO for managing the land. As part of the process, the project holds public hearings on the strategic plans so that local residents can learn about the AO's plans. Once the plan is approved, the project also assists AOs in organizing auctions to lease out the land to local farmers.

In 2005, Tashbulak Aiyl Okmotu (AO) went to the Jalalabad Oblast court to resolve a conflict over agricultural land with the Jalalabad Health Resort. Tashbulak claimed that 812 ha of its land had been illegally allocated to the health resort by a decision of the rayon and oblast administrations. The AO wanted this land back because, due to a shortage of agricultural land, over one thousand local residents had been unable to receive private land shares. The only land Tashbulak had at its disposal was 480 ha of state-owned land from the Land Redistribution Fund (LRF) that it could potentially lease out for five-year terms.

The Jalalabad court decided in favor of Tashbulak and annulled the allocation of land to the health resort. The decision, however, failed to be executed. When the USAID Land Reform and Market Development Project came to Tashbulak in August 2007 as part of its work on developing strategic plans for LRF land in 120 AOs, the local government turned to the project for help in settling this conflict. The problem was that, although the court had annulled the land allocation, it did not stipulate the return of the 812 ha to Tashbulak. Consequently, the Gosregister (State Registration) office refused to transfer the land to the AO. Project specialists intervened to convince Gosregister officials that the court decision was a sufficient legal basis for returning the land.

After distributing private land shares to villagers, there remained 239 ha of land, which the AO then joined to its existing 480 ha of LRF land, increasing the size of the fund to 719 ha. On December 12, 2007, Tashbulak received the State Act, officially giving it managerial control of the full 719 ha of LRF land. By increasing the size of its LRF land, the AO will now be able to lease it out to local residents and earn important revenue for its budget.